



TRICARE HELP E-MAIL SERVICE (THEMS) NEWSLETTER

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TRICARE_help@amedd.army.mil



TRICARE Help Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the TRICARE Help E-mail Service, operated by the US Army Medical Command in San Antonio, Texas.

THEMS

What is THEMS?

THEMS is a free e-mail service that provides quick answers to TRICARE questions. Clinical questions should be referred to your primary care provider.

WHO RESPONDS TO E-MAIL REQUESTS?

The US Army Medical Command TRICARE staff. In some cases, referrals are made to other agencies for a response. For cases referred to other agencies, inquirers are informed who will respond to their inquiries. Information is kept confidential, and we track each e-mail inquiry to ensure answers are provided quickly and professionally.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE A REPLY?

In most cases, responses are provided within 1 – 2 business days. If an e-mail requires research or referral to other agencies, it may take longer; but, you

can expect an interim response within 3 – 5 business days.

HOW CAN I USE THE HELP ADDRESS?

The e-mail service can be accessed worldwide from any computer connected to the Internet. The e-mail address is:

TRICARE_help@amedd.army.mil

Comments from THEMS Users

“Thanks so much for your prompt and right on the mark answer.” - RS

“Thank you for your professional guidance, concern, and competence. Your assistance has cleared up the troubling problem that my wife has had with TRICARE benefits. We are grateful to you for your responsive efforts.”- JE

“Thank you for your help in getting TRICARE For Life to process our medical claims....We appreciate the efforts made on our behalf....We hope that we can fly solo now, but it is comforting to know that you are there for us (and countless others).”- WS

“Thank you so much for getting back to me. I really didn't know what to do next, and I'm so impressed with how helpful you are.”- KR



Questions & Answers

What is a BCAC?

Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinators (BCACs) are TRICARE experts, located at each military treatment facility (MTF), who can assist you with TRICARE questions and concerns. A BCAC listing can be located at the following website:

<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tricare/beneficiary/BCACDirectory.htm>

How do I obtain emergency care through TRICARE?

Anyone covered by TRICARE should seek treatment at the nearest emergency room right away if care is needed, in the judgment of a prudent layperson, to safeguard life, limb, or eyesight. If you're a TRICARE Prime enrollee and use a civilian emergency room you must notify your Primary Care Manager (PCM) or Health Care Finder at the TRICARE Service

Center, within 24 hours or as soon as reasonably possible. In addition, any follow-up care related to the visit must be scheduled with your PCM.

Was the Catastrophic Cap reduced for Retirees?

Yes, the catastrophic cap for retirees and their families was reduced from \$7,500 to \$3,000 per fiscal year effective October 30, 2000. Once accumulated deductibles, co-payments, and cost shares have reached the catastrophic cap, TRICARE will pay providers the entire allowed amount for covered services.

Will I be reimbursed for travel expenses to see a specialist?

The Fiscal Year 2001 National Defense Authorization Act provided non-active duty TRICARE Prime beneficiaries with reimbursement for "reasonable" travel expenses when referred by their PCM more than 100 miles for medically necessary non-emergent care. The referring MTF is responsible for issuing the travel authorization for MTF enrolled beneficiaries. If a civilian PCM is referring the Prime enrollee, the Lead Agent Office will issue the travel authorization.

TRICARE Prime Remote for Active Duty Family Members Program (TPRADFM) was scheduled for implementation in Apr 2002 but has been delayed. What happens until the program is implemented?

The interim "waived charges" benefit, which is retroactive to Oct. 30, 2000, will remain in effect until the implementation of the TPRADFM (target implementation September 2002). This interim benefit waives cost shares, co-payments, and deductibles for active duty family members who accompany their sponsors on assignment to remote locations, and reside with those sponsors.

What are the priorities for care in MTFs?

By law, the priorities for care are:

1. Active duty personnel
2. Active duty family members enrolled in TRICARE Prime
3. Retirees and their family members, and survivors enrolled in TRICARE Prime
4. Active duty family members not enrolled in TRICARE Prime

5. Retirees and their family members, and survivors not enrolled in TRICARE Prime

Non-enrolled persons eligible for military health care may be seen at military hospitals and clinics on a space-available basis.

If I have a grievance for services under the TRICARE program, whom can I contact?

Grievances for MTF care should be reported to the MTF BCAC or Health Benefits Advisor, the MTF Commander, or the regional Lead Agent BCAC. The regional Managed Care Support Contractor is responsible for addressing grievances involving civilian network providers.

How can I find out more information about the TRICARE program?

In addition to THEMS, here are some other information resources regarding TRICARE: TRICARE Service Centers and BCACs or Health Benefits Advisors (HBAs) at military treatment facilities or Lead Agent Offices. TRICARE also has a website available at www.tricare.osd.mil.



Click here to send your TRICARE questions, concerns, or comments.